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THE FALCON RISES AGAIN

Robert Falcon Ouellette was wooed by at least three major political parties after finishing a strong and surprising third in October's mayoral election. However, the university professor says he's going to try to hitch his wagon to Justin Trudeau's star. Story, page 5.

SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Email kept from public

Manitoba ombudsman. Report delves into 2012 immigration debate

A report from Manitoba's ombudsman says there is no plausible explanation as to why a revealing government document — one that contradicted the official government position at the time — was withheld from the media and the Opposition Progressive Conservatives.

The report released Wednesday delves into an April 2012 immigration debate at the legislature that stirred up controversy because the government used civil servants to gather supporters to sit in the public gallery. For more than a year, then-immigration minister Christine Melnick denied being behind the plan and said a top civil servant made the decision on his own.

Freedom-of-information requests filed at the time by The Canadian Press, two other media outlets and the Tories revealed many civil servants were involved. But among the dozens of documents that were released, there was no link to the minister. It was only revealed late last year that Melnick did indeed give the order.

The ombudsman's report says there was one email that outlined Melnick's involvement that should have been included in the freedom-of-information responses but was not. The report says immigration-department staff told the ombudsman they missed that email when searching through the records in 2012.

"There is no evidence that the department deliberately withheld records," the report states.

"There is, however, no plausible explanation as to how this record was missed during the search. The record was in the email accounts of six staff, including the assistant deputy minister, the department's access and privacy co-ordinator and the person responsible for conducting the search for records."

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Bowman goes 7 for 8 at EPC

Pay pals? Councillors vote unanimously to cut their own salaries

COLIN FAST
winnipeg@metronews.ca

In the latest example of the new co-operative atmosphere at city hall, Mayor Brian Bowman managed to convince members of the executive policy committee (EPC) to cut their own salaries on Wednesday.

And not only was the vote unanimous, the mayor and councillors appeared almost happy to give up nearly $12,000 each. "It's a symbol to everyone saying we're tightening our belts and coming into a very difficult budget process," said Coun. Marty Morantz.

"I think all councillors should be paid the same," added John Orlikow.

The salary cut was one of seven motions from Bowman that were approved by the EPC. Others included supporting the United Way's homelessness strategy, placing limits on councillor expense accounts and creating a new office of policy analysts.

The administration was also asked to report back on incorporating art into all capital projects, establishing an online volunteer management system for community centres and developing landscaping and safety standards for parking lots.

But EPC did not endorse Bowman's motion to eliminate severance packages for councillors. The issue was sent to council without a recommendation, over Bowman's objection.

"I made my views very clear during the election, and I'm going to honour that commitment, and regardless of the outcome of the vote at council next week, I will not be taking a severance at any time," Bowman said.

Based on the revised salary figures, Bowman would be giving up a severance worth more than $38,000 when his first term ends in 2018.

In numbers

$12,000

Amount councillors have agreed to forgo

Mayor Brian Bowman said he's expecting 'vigorous discussion' at the Dec. 10 city-council meeting over his proposal to axe severance pay. BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

Mayor says he doesn't expect all of EPC to support axing of severance

He came prepared for a fight, but instead his inner circle delayed the bout.

Mayor Brian Bowman told media after Wednesday's executive policy committee (EPC) meeting that he would have preferred to see his EPC support his motion on the elimination of what some councillors call "severance" and the mayor calls a "political payout" — when council members decide not to run for re-election or are voted out.

Instead, EPC pushed the motion on to the Dec. 10 council meeting without an endorsement.

Bowman said he had conversations with all councillors about this topic last week.

"I wanted to let them know that this was coming; I wanted to let them know this was something that I was very serious about."

Asked if he expects EPC to support his motion next Wednesday, as was usually the case with his predecessor, former mayor Sam Katz, Bowman said his only expectation is that "they'll show up and they'll be ready to discuss the issues."

Coun. Brian Mayes said he was not convinced that all cases should be treated the same way, adding that he agrees that in some instances, such as if a city councillor leaves mid-term, the severance pay should not kick in.

BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

Campaign promises

Bowman said staff shouldn't read too much into "belt tightening" comments made by councillors. "These campaign pledges that I made are what we were discussing here today," added Bowman.

No Frills revives shuttered grocery stores

Back on the shelf. Two former Extra Food locations reopening under new banner in first half of 2015

SHANE GIBSON
shane.gibson@metronews.ca

Two Winnipeg neighbourhoods left with fewer options for fresh produce and groceries following the closure of area Extra Food stores are getting their local grocers back.

Loblaw Companies Ltd. confirmed to Metro Wednesday the former Extra Food locations at 600 Notre Dame Ave. and 1445 Main St. are slated to reopen, but this time under the company's No Frills banner.

Quoted

"We are proud to bring greater economic value to the residents of Winnipeg through our first ever No Frills locations in Manitoba."

Kevin Groh, Loblaw's vice-president of corporate affairs and communications

"No Frills stores are a proven discount model," said Kevin Groh, Loblaw's vice-president of corporate affairs and communications, in an email. "We are proud to bring greater economic value to the residents of Winnipeg through our first ever No Frills locations in Manitoba."

The Main Street Extra Foods has sat empty since March 2013, and the Notre Dame location was shuttered in late 2012.

Unlike Extra Foods, No Frills stores are owned and operated by franchisees, and Groh said the stores would stock much of the same products as Extra Foods, including President's Choice, No Name and national brands.

There are currently 225 No Frills stores operating from coast-to-coast in Canada.

Groh said the two Winnipeg stores will be in business some time in the first half of 2015, and the openings come after the company came to a "mutually agreed upon labour agreement" with the union that represents Loblaw employees in Manitoba.

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Coun. John Orlikow speaks to reporters after Wednesday's executive policy committee meeting. BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

Police HQ. Committee approves $2M in repairs

Repair work on the Winnipeg police headquarters looks likely to continue uninterrupted after executive policy committee approved taking $2 million out of a reserve fund to cover expenses.

However, at least one councillor said a detailed account of the money should be provided back to city council.

Coun. John Orlikow said during the meeting that his concern is the city's report left open the possibility the money could be spent elsewhere.

Acting CAO Deepak Joshi said the $2 million is specifically for water damage on the building, the result of a rainstorm this past August that overwhelmed the roof drains.

"The $2 million will be used so that the work, which has already been approved by the insurance company, such as flooring, drywall, electrical work, in order to achieve interim occupancy" can be done, said Joshi, referring to a permit that would confirm that the building is safe.

The public service, added Joshi, is suggesting the repair work be done by Caspian, the company charged with the building renovations, since sending it out to tender would take too much time and possibly further delay the police from moving in.

In a previous interview with Metro, finance chair Coun. Marty Morantz said he expects the $2 million to return to municipal coffers after the insurance claim is settled.

The amended request for the money, with the stipulation that anything above $2 million come back to finance committee, now moves on to city council for a final vote. BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

Ouellette seeks federal Liberal nomination in Winnipeg Centre

Politics. Former mayoral candidate says Grits' vision for the country resonates with him

An aboriginal candidate who won praise for his mayoral campaign in Winnipeg wants to become a Liberal member of Parliament.

Robert-Falcon Ouellette said Wednesday he is seeking the Liberal nomination in Winnipeg Centre, a seat held by New Democrat Pat Martin.

Ouellette, 38, was something of a Cinderella candidate in October's mayoral race. With no organization, name recognition or party backing, he finished a strong third with 16 per cent of the vote and gained attention for speaking about poverty and race issues.

Ouellette had been eyeing other political parties but said the Liberals reflect his vision for the country.

Robert-Falcon Ouellette on the campaign trail earlier this year. The third runner-up in the mayoral race will enter a new race next year. METRO FILE

"I just felt that the Liberal Party was the party that really represented, and was speaking to, me more as an individual, talking about their vision for the country."

Winnipeg Centre includes some of the poorest neighbourhoods in the country. Ouellette lived there briefly as a child before moving to Calgary and Quebec City.

"I think there is a population and groups of people within that riding that have been historically ignored by the political class and have not had their issues addressed in an appropriate way," Ouellette said.

He now lives in the suburbs of south Winnipeg and works as the director of aboriginal focus programs at the University of Manitoba.

No date has been set for the nomination meeting, and there is already one other candidate — Allan Wise, who heads a non-profit neighbourhood-renewal agency in Winnipeg Centre. Wise is also a sessional instructor of political science at the University of Winnipeg.

Wise said he welcomes Ouellette's entry into the race and said it's a positive sign for the Liberals to have a contested nomination in a seat held by another party.

"It's good for the health of democracy to have a healthy competition and to get the Liberal membership to come out and vote for who they think is going to be the right person to lead them into the next election." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Labour

Liquor-store employees vote to strike

The holidays could be filled with less spirits this year after liquor-store workers and distribution staff across Manitoba voted 97 per cent in favour of possible strike action.

The vote gives the Manitoba Government Employees Union (MGEU) the authority to set a strike date, which could happen during the busy lead-up to Christmas if an agreement isn't reached soon.

"We stand in solidarity: the liquor workers want the employer to come back to the bargaining table prepared to bargain in earnest, without the concessions and with a reasonable wage offer," said MGEU president Michelle Gawronsky in a statement.

The MGEU said voter turnout among the 868 workers was "historically high" and included staff from retail stores, head office and the distribution centre. METRO

Police release new photo of missing man

Police have released a new photo of a man taken just hours before he disappeared after leaving a downtown Winnipeg bar nearly a month ago.

Colten Pratt, 26, was alone when he was last seen leaving the Regal Beagle bar at the Marlborough Inn on Smith Street around 9:30 p.m. on Nov. 6. Police said Wednesday he was heading toward Ellice Avenue but couldn't say which direction he went.

The new photo comes from surveillance video taken of Pratt while he visited the Liquor Mart on Ellice Avenue before he went to the Regal Beagle.

Colten Pratt CONTRIBUTED

"That picture is what he was wearing that day," explained police spokesperson Const. Jason Michalyshen, who said Pratt has never been reported missing before. "We're trying to keep this information as up to date in the media and the public's eye as possible."

Police were able to track down a woman seen in a selfie taken by Pratt while he was at the Regal Beagle, and Michalyshen said she's not a suspect in his disappearance.

Michalyshen said police have no reason to believe Pratt met with foul play.

Pratt is aboriginal, five-foot-10 and roughly 160 pounds with a thin build, short brown hair and brown eyes. He was last seen wearing a grey T-shirt, brown plaid jacket, blue jeans and a grey tuque. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Wildlife

Province hopes to stop zebra mussels with legislation

First, Manitoba tried killing them with potash.

Now the province will try to curb the spread of zebra mussels through legislation with strict rules for boaters.

Conservation Minister Gord Mackintosh has introduced a bill that would make it illegal to transport, possess or release zebra mussels and would require boats in transit to be inspected at designated stations.

The province declared victory over zebra mussels in June after a unique experiment that doused four infested harbours with liquid potash.

The harbours were initially declared mussel-free, but mussels were discovered in Lake Winnipeg later in the summer.

The invasive species, which has been in the Great Lakes for almost two decades and has spread throughout parts of the U.S., was discovered for the first time in Manitoba in October 2013. The mussels reproduce quickly and disrupt the food chain, clog pipes and create algae. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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HILL TOP RESEARCH

Winnipeg's The Crooked Brothers selling their Organs on Demand

Thank You, I'm Sorry.
Folk trio recorded newest album in downtown warehouse — and, because they fed the cat, a B&B

JARED STORY
winnipeg@metronews.ca

Winnipeg folk trio The Crooked Brothers celebrates the release of its third album, Thank You, I'm Sorry, at the West End Cultural Centre next week. CONTRIBUTED

Winnipeg folk trio The Crooked Brothers could be described as "gutsy."

Thank You, I'm Sorry — released in September via Transistor 66 Record Co. — contains a track titled Organs on Demand. Written by band member Jesse Matas, the song features visceral spoken-word vocals on top of a deep groove.

"It's a series of writings (Matas) did based on this work his uncle (human-rights lawyer David Matas) was doing," said Darwin Barker, who along with Matas, is joined in The Crooked Brothers by Matt Foster.

"His uncle was actually nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize for his reports on the organ harvesting that happens in China.

"It's a fun song at festivals. People get up and start grooving to the dance, and it's fun to watch people's faces once they realize what's going on lyrically."

Thank You, I'm Sorry sees Matas, Foster and Barker trading lead vocals and juggling instruments like banjos, mandolins and guitars from track to track. The trio can also juggle studios, recording the album at Private Ear Recording, in a downtown Winnipeg warehouse and in a log house bed-and-breakfast outside Selkirk, Man.

"Our friend Matt Jenkins, a blacksmith, has a shop out there (Cloverdale Farm). He helped build the house with his dad before his dad passed away," Barker said. "His mom runs the bed-and-breakfast and she was going on vacation overseas and wanted someone to watch her cat.

"So we got to use her entire space as long as we fed the cat."

The deets

The Crooked Brothers are at the West End Cultural Centre on Friday, Dec. 12. Tickets are $20 at the Winnipeg Folk Festival Music Store and Ticketmaster (plus fees). Showtime is 8 p.m.

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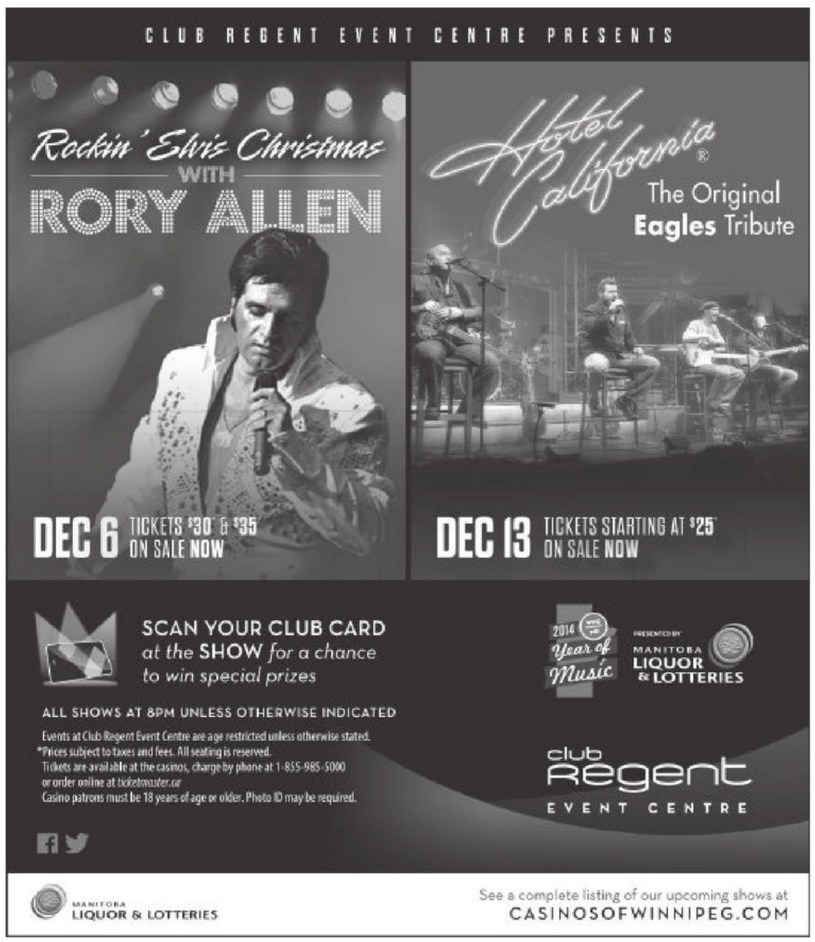
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Christmas generosity is a piece of cake

Crosseyed Rascals.
Comedy troupe's show Bradma's Fruitcake is free but they urge people to make donations

The Crosseyed Rascals are all about fruitcake and giving back to the community this holiday season. The improv troupe's members, Tim Webster, Mitch Krohn and Kerri Woloszyn, will perform their 12th annual Christmas show, Bradma's Fruitcake, on Dec. 6.

Webster said this year the show's format will be a countdown, which is popular among their audiences. They'll start with six scenes and the audience votes for the ones they want to continue all the way down to No. 1.

They're also including short-form games in between scenes, in which audience members will pick out of a bag of fruitcake donated from Oma's Bakery. Admission is free, but the troupe hopes that showgoers will consider donating non-perishable food items to Winnipeg Harvest or a cash donation to Habitat for Humanity at their show.

"Christmas is a time for giving and everyone is spending a lot, so to make a show free, people don't have to spend money," says Krohn. "We give them the option instead of giving it to us to give to Habitat for Humanity and give back to the community in the form of food donations."

The Crosseyed Rascals have been performing improv since 2001. ADRIANA MINGO/FOR METRO

Mitch Krohn and Tim Webster, Crosseyed Rascals improv troupe members, fool around for the camera. ADRIANA MINGO/FOR METRO

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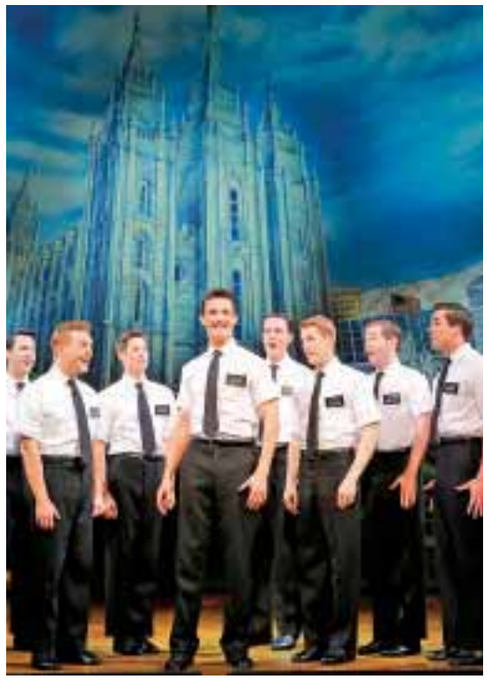
Snowblower swiped.
Theft victim films deed and puts video on YouTube

A Winnipeg man is left without a snowblower after purple-clad thieves nabbed it from his driveway — and it's all caught on tape.

The two-part surveillance video was originally uploaded to YouTube last week and was later posted on Reddit on Dec. 2. Each video shows the heist from a different angle.

The video shows two thieves wearing head-to-toe purple and driving a red Ford truck with a covered licence plate. A video caption under the post says, "The truck is an older red Ford with what appears to be a two-tone decaling extended cab 4x4 with a heavy duty bumper and big mud flaps and rolled box cover." There were other items in the cab, including a wheelbarrow and pylons.

According to the video's time stamp, the thieves swiped the snowblower within two minutes in broad daylight on Nov. 15 at 4:28 p.m. ADRIANA MINGO/FOR METRO



Book some laughs today

The Book of Mormon is the Tony Award-winning musical from the creators of South Park. Tickets for the nine-time Tony-winning musical go on sale on Dec. 8 and the show runs March 17 to 22 at the Centennial Concert Hall. Tickets go on sale at 10 a.m. and are available through Ticketmaster. Prices range from $60.25 to $116.20.

JOAN MARCUS/HANDOUT

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NDP. Mulcair endorses stricter rules for firearms

A New Democrat government would ensure police are able to track every firearm in Canada, but would also seek to avoid the pitfalls that made the now-defunct long-gun registry so controversial, Tom Mulcair said Wednesday.

The NDP leader disputed the Conservative government's contention that gun registration is an unfair, onerous requirement for law-abiding gun owners.

"I have nothing against seeing honest farmers and duck hunters be able to have their weapons," Mulcair said outside an NDP caucus meeting. "But, you know, that honest hunter who goes out with his pickup truck, it's a registered pickup truck ... the trailer's registered and the 4X4 is registered. Heck, his dog is registered."

New Democrats "have confidence in the ability of farmers and duck hunters to fill out a form," he added. While farmers and hunters are entitled to own firearms, Mulcair suggested there must be strict limits.

"What kind of duck do you hunt with an assault weapon? A pterodactyl?"

There's no reason a system of tracking firearms has to go "overboard," as the Liberals did when they created the long-gun registry and imposed criminal penalties for failure to register, Mulcair said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jean Béliveau was a 'role model to us all'

Serge Laflamme lights a candle at a statue of Jean Béliveau on Wednesday in Longueuil, Que. The Montreal Canadiens hockey legend passed away Tuesday at the age of 83. On his death, he was remembered as a "legend" and a "role model to us all." Tributes poured in from the hockey world and from political leaders after the Canadiens announced that perhaps their best player ever, and certainly their greatest captain, had died. "He was a hero to generations of his fellow French Canadians and hockey fans everywhere. Our sport has lost a great ambassador," said Canadiens owner and president Geoff Molson.

PHOTO: RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS
TEXT: THE CANADIAN PRESS

For more coverage, see page 25

Analysis. Veterans Affairs underspent on war graves

Veterans Affairs spent millions less than it budgeted for maintaining war graves last year in cemeteries like those in Italy visited recently by Julian Fantino, a report reveals.

The departmental performance review of the memorial and cemetery maintenance program shows just 2,500 of 7,000 grave markers were properly maintained last year.

The government earmarked more than $18.5 million in fiscal 2013-14 to help preserve the memory of Canadians who died serving their country, the programs analysis report shows.

Instead, the department spent $2.6 million less, or just over $15.9 million, with just eight people doing the preservation work — far short of the 41 full-time employees originally projected for the program.

The analysis also says foreign service-providers completed maintenance work on only 80 per cent of Canada's overseas memorials, short of their 85 per cent target.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Class action

A federal government lawyer is asking B.C.'s highest court to throw out a class-action lawsuit by Canadian Forces members injured in Afghanistan who say they've been stripped of benefits.

Prostitution law comes on anniversary of massacre

Dec. 6. Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre is also a nationwide day of action on violence against women

It's "sick and twisted" that Canada's controversial new prostitution bill comes into force on a day dedicated to eradicating violence against women, says one of the women behind a successful court challenge of the old laws.

The new legislation, known as the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act, comes into force on Saturday, Dec. 6, which is also the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

The day — the anniversary of the shooting deaths of 14 women at Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal at the hands of gunman Marc Lepine — has evolved into an occasion to commemorate all female victims of violence.

Those who work in the sex industry have expressed their disdain for the new prostitution laws, which they fear will result in more victims, not fewer.

"I think that it's a really sick and twisted day for it to happen," said Valerie Scott, one of three women behind the landmark Supreme Court case that declared Canada's legislation on prostitution unconstitutional.

"That day should not solely be for women who were murdered by Marc Lepine, it should also be for women who were murdered by Robert Pickton," said Scott.

Pickton, a B.C. pig farmer, was convicted almost exactly seven years ago for the gruesome murders of six prostitutes, and had been charged in the deaths of 20 others.

The case was among those referenced by the Supreme Court last year when it struck down Canada's prostitution laws, arguing that they deprived sex workers of the ability to work safely.

The decision gave the government one year to establish new laws. The new bill was introduced June 4, reviewed by both the House of Commons and Senate and granted royal assent on Nov. 6.

By the bill's own terms, it was slated to come into effect 30 days after that — which is how Dec. 6 came to be the date.

"We do not control the passage of bills in the Senate, nor when a bill receives royal assent," said Clarissa Lamb, a spokeswoman for Justice Minister Peter MacKay.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sensitivity issue?

"I'm sure if they had thought about it, they might have picked another date, if they were a bit sensitive."

NDP justice critic Francoise Boivin

Quebecor Inc.

University may study Peladeau's media ownership

The centre for media studies at Universite Laval is expected to decide next week if it will study whether Pierre Karl Peladeau should continue owning the controlling shares in Quebecor Inc.

The Liberal government has tabled a motion asking the university to look into the effects on democracy of a politician who controls a media empire.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada Revenue Agency

Heartbleed hacker facing more charges

The RCMP have laid 16 more charges against a London, Ont., man originally charged last April in connection with the Heartbleed computer bug and the loss of data from the Canada Revenue Agency website.

Stephen Arthuro Solis-Reyes had been charged only with unauthorized use of a computer and mischief in relation to data, in the revenue agency case.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Top Mountie testifying in harassment case

A longtime Mountie suing the RCMP for harassment was seen as "almost unequivocally embittered towards the force" while his superiors were regarded as "blameless" despite the man's repeated allegations against them, RCMP Commissioner Bob Paulson testified in a Newmarket, Ont., court on Wednesday.

The head of the force was subpoenaed to testify at the civil trial of Sgt. Peter Merrifield, who alleges in his lawsuit that he was harassed by some of his superiors within the RCMP and that they employed aggressive and intimidating means to try to silence him.

He was questioned at length on what he was told about Merrifield, with Merrifield's lawyer suggesting the commissioner got incomplete information on the officer, which led to further damage to his reputation as recently as last year.

Court also heard that Merrifield had written to Paulson raising the issue of a superior's possible involvement with prostitutes.

When Merrifield's lawyer asked if an investigation was conducted into the matter, Paulson said "no."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mountie shot

An officer who was shot during a traffic stop in Kamloops, B.C., is in critical but stable condition and has provided Mounties with information, says Supt. Brad Mueller. Mueller said the officer underwent emergency surgery.

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Hundreds mourn woman who aided girls

Germany. Woman came to rescue of girls being harassed by men, was left comatose after fight, pulled from life support

Hundreds of mourners paid their last respects Wednesday to a young woman hailed as a hero, who suffered fatal injuries after intervening to help two teenage girls being harassed by a group of men.

Tugce Albayrak had been in a coma since mid-November following an early-morning altercation in Offenbach, near Frankfurt. She died Friday, her 23rd birthday, after her family gave permission to switch off her life support.

Albayrak's funeral was held outside a mosque in Waechtersbach in central Germany. Her coffin, covered by a green cloth with Arabic script in gold, was placed on a stone table, flanked by German and Turkish flags. Turkey's ambassador to Germany and the Hesse state governor also attended the ceremony, conducted in both Turkish and German.

The bravery of the Turkish-German woman triggered an outpouring of public sympathy in Germany.

Albayrak and two friends came to the aid of two teenage girls who were being harassed by several young men inside a bathroom in a McDonald's at about 4 a.m. on Nov. 15. Later outside, one of the men allegedly hit Albayrak in the head, and she fell to the ground.

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The coffin with Tugce Albayrak rests outside a mosque during a funeral ceremony in Waechtersbach, Germany, on Wednesday. MICHAEL PROBST/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Climate change

2014 tied for hottest year: UN

Temperature data shows 2014 is currently tied for the hottest year on record, the UN weather agency said Wednesday.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said the global average temperature in January-October was 0.57 C above average, the same as in 2010.

The ocean temperature set a new record in the nine-month period, while land temperatures were the fourth or fifth highest since record-keeping began in the 19th century, the WMO said in a UN report.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sexual abuse

The truth must prevail: Pope

Pope Francis assured Dominican authorities on Wednesday that the truth must prevail in the case of his former ambassador to the Caribbean country who is accused of sexually abusing young boys. Francis met with the Dominican Republic's top prosecutor, Francisco Dominguez Brito, after his Wednesday general audience. Jozef Wesolowski has been defrocked and placed under modified house arrest inside Vatican City pending a decision by the Vatican criminal court on whether to indict him.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Airstrikes. Iran believed to have struck at ISIL: U.S.

Iranian jets have carried out airstrikes in Iraq against militants from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in recent days, U.S. officials and independent analysts say, underscoring the strange alliances generated by the war against the extremist group that has beheaded Americans and blown up rivals' holy sites.

Washington and Tehran are locked in tough negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. But at the same time, the two adversaries have been fighting parallel campaigns on the same side in Iraq to defend the Shiite-dominated government — and the region's Kurds — from ISIL militants who have seized large sections of Iraq and Syria.

It has long been known that Iranian troops and advisers have been fighting alongside Iraqi forces against ISIL, but until this week there had been no confirmation of Iranian air activity. The timing and nature of the strikes are not clear, but U.S. officials say some involved American-made F-4 Phantoms, twin-engine fighter bombers that were sold to Iran's U.S.-backed shah in the 1970s and were last produced by McDonnell Aircraft Corp. in 1981.

Qatari-based broadcaster Al-Jazeera filmed a jet flying over Iraq on Nov. 30 that was identified by Jane's Defence Weekly as an Iranian Phantom.

Speaking in Brussels on Wednesday, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Iranian attacks on ISIL militants would represent a positive development.

"I think it's self-evident that if Iran is taking on ISIL in some particular place, and it's confined to taking on ISIL, and it has an impact, its net effect is positive," Kerry told reporters. "But that's not something we're co-ordinating."

In Iran, a spokeswoman for the foreign ministry, Marzieh Afkham, also denied that Iran has co-operated with the U.S.-led coalition but neither confirmed nor denied the Iranian airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq.

Iraq's Prime Minister, Haider al-Abadi, told reporters Wednesday, "I'm not aware there were Iranian airstrikes."

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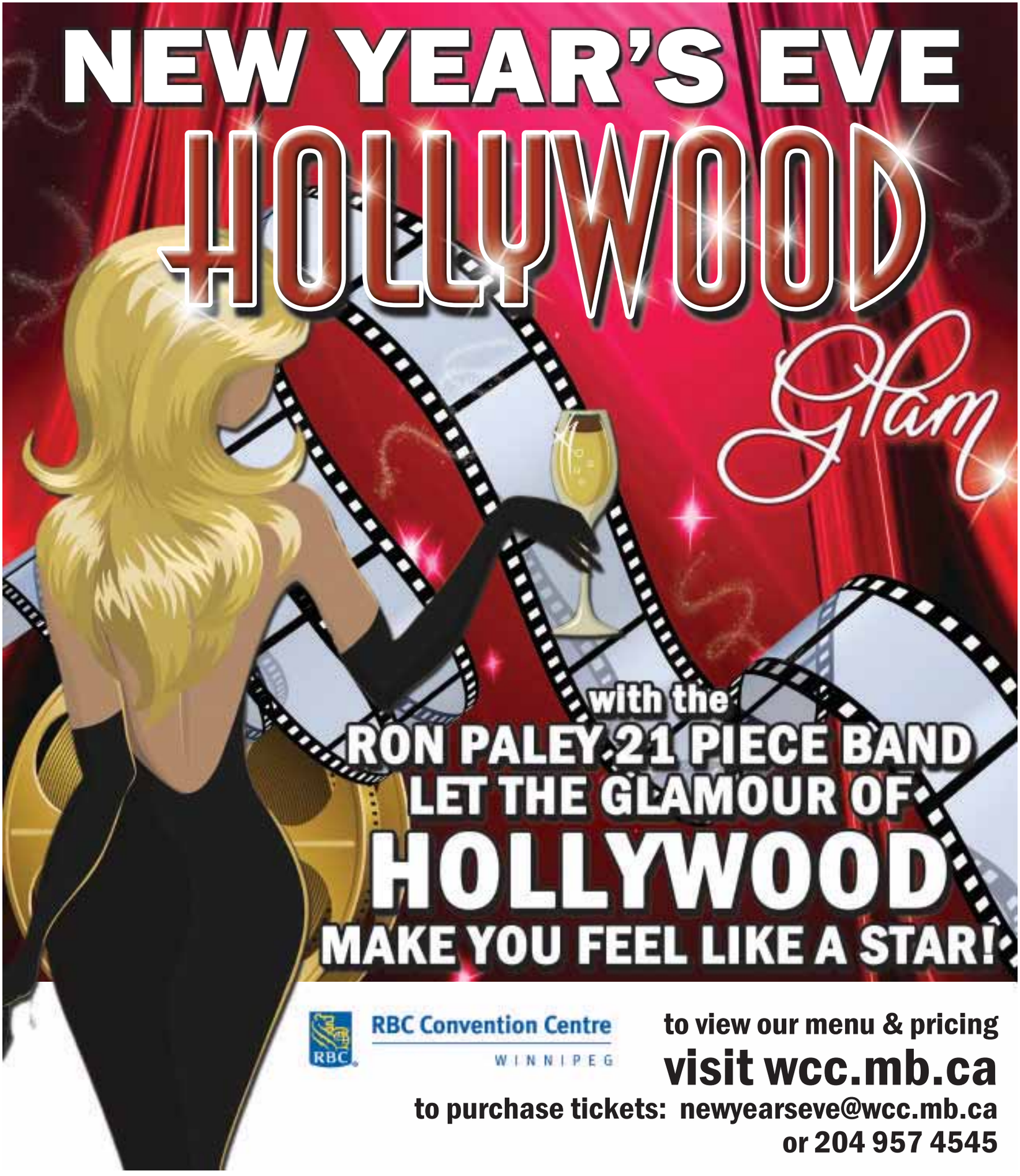
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Two more women accuse Bill Cosby of sex abuse

Attorney Gloria Allred, left, speaks at a press conference with Chelan, right, an alleged victim of Bill Cosby, on Wednesday in Los Angeles, Calif. Cosby has been accused of sexual assault by approximately 20 women.

FREDERICK M. BROWN/GETTY IMAGES

Press conference. The pair have never spoken about their experiences: Attorney

Three women who claim they were victimized by Bill Cosby appeared at a Wednesday afternoon news conference called by attorney Gloria Allred.

Allred wrote in a news release that she will propose a way the women can "obtain justice" despite statutes of limitations that would prevent criminal or civil cases from being filed.

Two of the women have never spoken about their experiences with Cosby, Allred wrote. The third woman was prepared to testify against Cosby to support another woman's 2005 lawsuit claiming sexual assault by Cosby in Pennsylvania. Cosby settled that lawsuit before it went to trial.

The press conference comes a day after a sexual battery lawsuit was filed by Judy Huth, a Southern California woman who claims the comedian molested her in a bedroom of the Playboy Mansion around 1974 when she was 15 years old.

Huth's lawsuit states she became aware of the psychological damage of the incident recently. Under California law, adult victims who suffered childhood sexual abuse can file lawsuits within three years of when they discover the abuse caused significant psychological trauma.

In recent weeks, more than a dozen women have accused Cosby of drugging and sexually abusing them. Cosby's lawyer, Marty Singer, did not respond to requests for comment on Wednesday, though Cosby's lawyers previously have issued statements characterizing some of the claims as previously discredited and others as untrue.

Cosby, 77, has steadfastly refused to answer questions about the sex abuse allegations.

Singer has denied some of the accusations and said several of the women accusing Cosby have been discredited, but none of the claims have been tested in court.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brown case. Stepfather apologizes for comments

The stepfather of Michael Brown has apologized for angry comments he made after the grand jury decided not to indict the police officer who killed his unarmed 18-year-old stepson, but said his remarks had nothing to do with the arson and looting that ravaged Ferguson and the surrounding area.

Police said Tuesday they are investigating Louis Head's comments as part of a broader inquiry into the arson, vandalism and looting that followed the announcement of the grand jury decision on Nov. 24. Brown's death inflamed racial tensions in the Missouri city of Ferguson and fuelled a debate over relations between law enforcement and black communities across the country.

Head said Wednesday in a statement to CNN that he was full of emotion when he yelled "Burn this bitch down!" in a crowd of protesters.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Egypt. Gov't to criminalize insulting the uprisings

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi has said his office is drafting a law to criminalize insulting the uprisings that toppled President Hosni Mubarak in 2011 and his Islamist successor Mohammed Morsi last year.

The move intends to ease concerns on both sides of a widening rift over whether the two popular movements expressed the genuine will of Egyptians.

The dispute was further stoked by a judge's dismissal last weekend of a murder case against Mubarak over the killing of protesters.

Just what would constitute an insult however was unclear, as was the time frame for the legislation's implementation. Such a law, however, would infringe on the freedom of expression guaranteed by the nation's new constitution. It follows an intense, yearlong media campaign to denigrate the 2011 uprising and paint those behind it as foreign agents. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sierra Leone

Doctor gets Ebola

Another Sierra Leonean doctor has become infected with Ebola, as the UN health agency said Wednesday that poor data from the outbreak is complicating efforts to measure progress in containing the disease.

Ebola has sickened more than 17,000 people, the majority of those in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Venezuela

Gov't to charge opposition figure

A leading opposition figure learned Wednesday she is being charged with involvement in an alleged plot to kill President Nicolas Maduro, a move she called an attempt to silence her and other critics of Venezuela's socialist government. Authorities informed Maria Corina Machado that she would be charged with conspiracy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Led by Texas

17-state coalition to sue feds over immigration

Texas is leading a 17-state coalition in suing over the Obama administration's recently announced executive actions on immigration.

Many top Republicans have denounced President Barack Obama's unilateral move designed to spare as many as five million people living illegally in the United States from deportation.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Street rallies

Hungary protests bolstered by U.S.

Buoyed by pressure from the United States, throngs of ordinary Hungarians are fighting back against Prime Minister Viktor Orban's drive to consolidate power through a perceived crackdown on civil liberties.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NYC. No indictment for officer in chokehold death

A grand jury cleared a white New York City police officer Wednesday in the videotaped chokehold death of an unarmed black man who had been stopped on suspicion of selling loose, untaxed cigarettes, a lawyer for the victim's family said.

The decision not to indict officer Daniel Pantaleo threatened to add to the tensions that have simmered in the city since the July 17 death of Eric Garner — a case that sparked outrage and drew comparisons to the fatal police shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson, Mo.

The Garner case also sparked protests, accusations of racist policing and calls for federal prosecutors to intervene.

Jonathan Moore, an attorney for Garner's family, said he was told of the grand jury's decision. Two law enforcement officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly on the case, confirmed the officer was not indicted.

"I am actually astonished based on the evidence of the video tape, and the medical examiner, that this grand jury at this time wouldn't indict for anything, is really just astonishing," Moore said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tamir Rice

The uncle of a 12-year-old boy who had a pellet gun when he was shot by a Cleveland police officer told mourners at a memorial service Wednesday that they must be advocates for change through peaceful protest and civil disobedience.

- Tamir Rice's uncle also said that police need to revamp how they train officers while also looking closer at police brutality and the use of excessive force.

Rome. Dig for subway finds ancient commercial farm

Archaeologists have unearthed an ancient commercial farm in the heart of modern Rome, taking advantage of subway construction to explore deeply in urban settings.

They worked some 20 metres down (six storeys deep) near St. John in Lateran Basilica. Today's Rome rests upon medieval layers and, under those, more ancient strata of life.

Rossella Rea, the dig's leader and a culture ministry official, said Wednesday that archaeologists discovered a first-century agricultural business, the closest to Rome's ancient centre ever found, an irrigation basin measuring 35 by 70 metres, and an extensive drainage system near the ancient Aqua Crabra water source.

Notable finds included a three-pronged iron pitchfork, storage baskets, leather fragments possibly from a farmhand's glove or shoe, and traces carved into stone by a waterwheel's repeated turning. Also extraordinary are well-preserved vestiges of willow and other tree roots and stumps. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This undated photo provided by the Cooperativa Archeologia shows lined-up amphoras that were discovered during a subway construction in Rome.

COOPERATIVA ARCHEOLOGIA, HO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Organizations representing victims burn a banner representing Dow Chemical Co. on Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bhopal still haunted by industrial disaster

India. Thirty years after factory gas leak claimed 15,000 lives, survivors demand punishment, more compensation

Hundreds of Bhopal's citizens took to the streets Wednesday, chanting slogans and carrying placards demanding harsher punishments for those responsible for the Bhopal gas tragedy.

On the morning of Dec. 3, 1984, a pesticide plant run by Union Carbide leaked about 40 tons of deadly methyl isocyanate gas into the air in Bhopal, quickly killing about 4,000 people. Lingering effects of the poison pushed the death toll to about 15,000 over the next few years, according to government estimates.

In all, at least 500,000 people were affected, according to the Indian government. Thirty years later, activists say thousands of children are still being born with brain damage, missing palates and twisted limbs because of their parents' exposure to the gas or water contaminated by it. Cancer rates in the city are inordinately high.

India's government is blamed for negotiating what the survivors consider low compensation and then ignoring them. Dow Chemical Co., meanwhile, is heavily criticized because it now owns Union Carbide — the American company that had a majority stake in the pesticide plant that leaked the lethal gas.

Dow says the legal case was resolved in 1989, when Union Carbide settled with the Indian government for $470 million.

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Consumer debt rising

Equifax. Heading into the holiday shopping season, Canadians already owe an average of $20,891, excluding mortgages

Canadians continue to pile on debt and now collectively owe more than $1.5 trillion, according to the latest figures from Equifax Canada.

The consumer credit-rating agency says the level at the end of the third quarter was up 7.4 per cent from $1.409 trillion a year ago.

Nearly two-thirds of the total owed, or $985.1 billion, is mortgage debt.

Excluding mortgages, the average debt held by Canadians stands at $20,891.

The auto-loan and instalment-loan sectors showed the most significant increases, at 6.8 and 5.8 per cent year-over-year respectively.

"Following a frenzied start to the festive shopping season, with more to come in the countdown to Christmas, we can expect the consumer debt to rise even further," said Regina Malina, senior director of decision insights at Equifax Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Drivers

Equifax said the increase in consumer demand for new credit has been driven mainly by credit-card and auto-credit inquiries.

- In addition, demand for consumer credit has now increased for six consecutive quarters in the West, while activity in the eastern provinces continues to slow.

Top court hears pregnancy discrimination case

Peggy Young (in foreground), a Virginia woman who lost her UPS job because she became pregnant, leaves the U.S. Supreme Court after the court heard arguments in her case Dec. 3 in Washington, D.C. The Supreme Court is weighing how much employers must do to accommodate pregnant workers under a federal law aimed at combating discrimination against them. UPS refused to give Young temporary light-duty work so she could avoid lifting heavy packages after she became pregnant in 2006. WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

Energy East project

Pipeline concerns narrowed down

Ontario's concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed Energy East pipeline narrowed considerably Wednesday following a meeting between premiers Kathleen Wynne and Jim Prentice of Alberta.

After the meeting, Wynne said her concerns were limited to greenhouse-gas emissions from the pipeline project itself, not from so-called upstream emissions. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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TSX 14,754.06 (+133.99)

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VOICES

HOUSING AS A HUMAN RIGHT

Do people have a constitutional right to adequate housing? The Court of Appeal for Ontario recently ruled that this is a matter for governments to decide, not courts, but advocates plan to take their fight to the Supreme Court of Canada. Metro staff from across the country talked to housing-rights champions for their take:

GETTY IMAGES FILE

The distinction the judge in this case made between the role of the courts and the role of the legislature is an important one, says Stacy Douglas, assistant professor of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University.

"It rests on an idea, central to our democracy, that parliament makes law, and courts merely ensure that this law is being upheld," she said. "However, this is an increasingly grey area as our law continues to change and transform to accommodate demands, for example, for socio-economic rights.

"The appellants in this case are claiming that the overall approach of the government has led to conditions that violate their rights to adequate housing. (But) because there is no constitutional right to housing and because there is no otherwise stated standard for them to use to evaluate governmental policy, the courts claim it must be a matter for the legislature."

As for whether an absence of government action can be considered a violation of constitutional rights, Douglas said "the law is constantly changing, and judges should be very careful about deciding too swiftly what is justiciable and what isn't. Something that is unacceptable today may very well be acceptable tomorrow."

SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO IN OTTAWA

Nova Scotia

Jim Graham,
program co-ordinator,
Affordable Housing
Association of Nova Scotia

Thoughts on the ruling?
I'm not surprised at all.... It's more of a policy issue than a charter issue.

Why should Canada care?
We live in a subarctic climate. If you're not adequately housed in the wintertime, you die. (Also) research demonstrates that ... secure housing is a foundation that you absolutely need if you're going to pursue better health, better education, better quality of life, period.

What unique challenges does your community face?
There's a lack of adequate affordable housing, and the shelter component is reasonably low.

What policy changes would you like to see?
To have the provincial government ... find policies that increase the supply of truly affordable housing, whether that's acquisition, refurbish, whether it's build some more, whether it's deeper rent subsidies.

British Columbia

DJ Larkin,
lawyer,
Pivot Legal Society

Thoughts on the ruling?
Obviously we're disappointed.... When it comes to fundamental rights, like the right to life and security of the person ... that's not a policy decision. It's extremely clear in international law and in Canada's legal obligations that there is some obligation to make sure that people are housed and safe.

Why should Canada care?
We're one of the only rich countries that doesn't have a national housing plan.... This is the most fundamental thing that you must ensure for a healthy society.

What unique challenges does your community face?
Vancouver (has) an increased number of unsheltered, homeless people on our streets. We're also struggling with very, very fast gentrification in our Downtown Eastside ... and people who relied on this neighbourhood as their last stop before homelessness are now being pushed out.

Manitoba

Clark Brownlee,
co-ordinator,
Right to Housing Coalition

Thoughts on the ruling?
It should've been passed ... and they should've been allowed to at least table their documents in support of Canadians who are homeless. I think it was a gutsy thing to take the rights to housing to court.

Why should Canada care?
From a purely economic standpoint, it costs more by far to have a homeless person live on the streets than in housing. It's a humanitarian issue outside of the rights issue.

What policy changes would you like to see?
I would like to see the federal government get back into funding social housing — the way they did for years. They stopped it in the early '90s in order to balance their budget. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation makes millions of dollars of profit every year that just goes into the federal coffers, which needs to go back into making social and affordable housing available to all Canadians. We don't need to have homelessness in this country.

Alberta

Tim Richter,
president & CEO,
Canadian Alliance to
End Homelessness

Thoughts on the ruling?
This is a bump in the long road to achieving housing rights in Canada.

Why should Canada care?
Housing is one of the basic preconditions upon which all other rights are built. People trapped in homelessness are not free — they are wards of largely dysfunctional systems that breed dependence on others for food, shelter, safety. There can be no right to life if your health is compromised by lack of adequate housing.

Interviews compiled by Kristen Lipscombe/Metro in Halifax, Darren Krause/Metro in Calgary and Adriana Mingo/for Metro in Winnipeg.

From refrigerated freebies to parking fundraisers: Initiatives from around the world to help the homeless

Saudi Arabia

Take at your leisure

A man in Saudi Arabia installed a fridge outside his home to allow homeless people to seek food without begging. Good Samaritans are welcome to help stock the fridge.

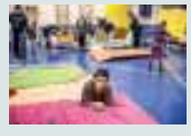
The Vatican

Shower in the Square

The Vatican is installing public restrooms with showers in St. Peter's Square to cater to homeless men and women. The idea came after the Pope's chief almsgiver met a homeless man who said he could always find food but never a place to wash himself.

France

Gym doubles as dorm



French advocacy group Not Without A Roof provides overnight shelter for homeless families by allowing them to sleep in the gym of their children's school. Eight schools offer shelter to more than 100 students.

Worldwide

Safe place to put your stuff

Several cities around the world, including New York City and Lisbon, provide lockers to their homeless citizens. There are strict rules pertaining to their use, including not using them for shelter.

U.S.A.

Park and donate

Pasadena, Calif., set up 14 orange parking meters around the city that accept cash and credit-card payments that go directly to local organizations that help feed and shelter the homeless.

metro

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Turning the page on family

Interview. Alan Cumming details his difficult childhood in a memoir, and says he's now at ease with missing out on being a dad

When Scottish actor Alan Cumming was 28, he endured an episode he's come to believe was a nervous breakdown — or, as he memorably refers to it in his new memoir, a Nervy B.

He was eight years into a marriage to actress Hilary Lyon and the couple was trying to have a child. As parenthood loomed and Cumming became increasingly swallowed by anxiety, he started to realize he hadn't quite escaped the dark shadow of his own father.

As documented in Not My Father's Son, the Tony Award-winning actor was raised by a mercurial terror who subjected Cumming and his brother, Tom, to a routine of jarring physical violence and withering verbal criticism.

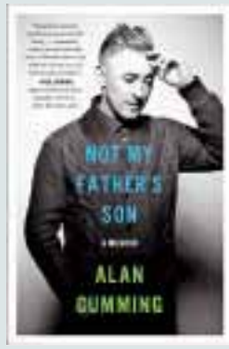
Then 28 years old and considering the reality of fatherhood for the first time, Cumming worried about a cycle of violence. Now 49 and still childless, Cumming says he remains vigilant for echoes of his deceased dad. "I'm not a father, and I've chosen not to be now," he said during an interview in Toronto this week. "Sometimes if I get annoyed with a child, or even my dogs, I sort of think: 'Oh gosh.' I sometimes check myself.

"That will never go away — that worry," he added. "Because I am my father's (son). I have madness on both sides of my family. Let's face it. It's a miracle I'm functioning."

Although Cumming just worked the book's title into conversation casually, it's actually quite a loaded statement for the multi-hyphenate star — one that launched a "crazy summer" that served as the setting for Cumming's memoir.

Alan Cumming's acting resumé is robust. He's pursued an unusually eclectic career onscreen with notable roles in the likes of X-Men 2, GoldenEye, Eyes Wide Shut, the Spy Kids franchise, Romy and Michele's High School Reunion, Circle of Friends, and, recently, The Good Wife, as resourceful and excitable campaign manager Eli Gold. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Daddy dearest?



In one of many chilling memories from his memoir, Cumming writes about his father flying into a rage over his supposedly shaggy hair. His dad dragged him by the scruff of his neck for dozens of yards, threw him across a workbench and shaved his head roughly with a pair of rusty clippers he usually used to shear sheep.

It was 2010, and Cumming was participating in the British genealogy documentary Who Do You Think You Are? As he was preparing to climb his family tree, he fell into contact with his father for the first time in more than a decade.

His dad was dying of cancer and had troubling news for his family: Alan Cumming, he was certain, was not actually his son but instead the product of an extramarital affair pursued by Cumming's beloved mother.

Just as he was reeling from this revelation, Cumming was reaching profound conclusions in his documentary-aided investigation into the mysterious death of his maternal grandfather, a British soldier named Tommy Darling who had disappeared into a life in Malaysia marked in equal measure by honour and havoc. Cumming documents the dual familial probes in sometimes alternating chapters in his tightly focused memoir. And he does eventually find out whether his own father was telling the truth — but it would spoil the book to reveal that answer here.

For a long time the actor was uncharacteristically terse on the topic of his father. In the U.K., where Cumming's life has long been a subject of interest to the tabloid press, it had been established that Cumming and his father were estranged but the reasons why were somewhat blurry.

Even those closest to Cumming were stunned to read his account of a childhood spent weathering a campaign of psychological cruelty and intimidation. "My friends are shocked," said Cumming, nattily clad in a royal blue dress shirt and black vest.

Considerations of parenthood lingered for Cumming, by the way, beyond that anxious time in his 20s.

Now, however — months away from his 50th birthday and years into his marriage to longtime partner Grant Shaffer — Cumming has confidently closed the book on fatherhood.

"I did want to do that, and I really don't now," he said. "I think I got older and I got content. And I don't want to change that. I'm content. So I don't think a child is something that I need to fulfil me anymore."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ed Sheeran ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Cuddly, ginger and British, Ed Sheeran is the top dog at Spotify. Sorry, Taylor

Who's the undisputed king of online music? Ed Sheeran is.

The cuddly British ginger was the most-streamed artist in 2014, according to Spotify, with a staggering 860 million individual streams of his songs.

And his album, X, was the most-streamed album globally, with 430 million listens.

I guess that month I spent streaming the Flash Gordon soundtrack on repeat didn't make as much of an impact as I'd hoped. And, of course, there's no mention of Spotify-ditching Taylor Swift in the report, so maybe Sheeran's win should come with an asterisk.

Now, for some truly terrifying numbers: Spotify's more than 50 million registered users streamed more than seven billion hours of music this year — adding up to about 800,000 years of music and maybe a few annoying audiobook ads.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Gaga isn't Swift's lover, but she's into it if Taylor is

NED EHRBAR
Metro in Hollywood

During a recent visit to Howard Stern's radio show, Lady Gaga set the record straight about her and another pop music titan. Stern pressed Gaga with, "Someone called in and said that you are now a lover of Taylor Swift's, that the two of you are making love to one another."

That guy, such a way with words. Anyway, Gaga insists there's nothing of the sort going on — although she'd be totally down if Swift wanted to give it a whirl.

"I don't think she would be into that," Gaga replied, adding later, "If she's into that, she can call me."

In a totally Gaga move, the Bad Romance singer revealed she likes Swift because Swift listens to her music, a piece of info Gaga picked up from a stylist they share. According to Gaga, Swift "was doing a shoot and he was in there styling her … and he goes, 'Taylor Swift is in here blasting Artpop so loud, and she is dancing and she is posing,' and I said to myself, 'I like this girl.'"

Twitter

@idinamenzel
I'm in awe of the moms who drop their kids off at school and actually put on a cute outfit. Pjs and biker boots for me.

@ABFalecbaldwin
I want to be ambassador to Spain. I was actually, on a soap opera.

@ConanOBrien
As we get closer and closer to the end of this tweet, I think it's important that we lower our expectations.

Michael Fassbender

Seems Michael is sweet on a surfing Swede

There's a new target for the jealous ire of all the Michael Fassbender fans out there, and her name is Alicia Vikander. Fassbender and the Swedish actress are reportedly dating after playing husband and wife in the upcoming film The Life Between Oceans. They've most recently been seen out surfing together in Australia, which I guess constitutes a date. While reps for Fassbender and Vikander declined to comment, there's always an anonymous source willing to chime in: "Michael and Alicia are casually dating, spending a lot of time together," the source tells E! News.

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The boys of the bash

There's no need for a simple two-button navy blue affair this holiday season. Whether you're picking something new for a party or on the hunt for the perfect present for a sartorially savvy friend, here's our pick of the season's best suiting with a fun, festive edge.

AFP

Auld Lang Syne

This Black Watch tartan tuxedo jacket is perfect for adding a little extra fun to formal occasions. The matching wool trousers ($265) are by no means a must, but hey, why not? It's the most wonderful time of the year!

J. Crew Ludlow Tuxedo Jacket in Black Watch, $525, jcrew.com

Holiday blues

As ever, H&M, the high-street brand, has some fun options. Try this cotton-blend blazer in an Oxford weave for an elegant light-blue solution to the Christmas party conundrum. Wear it with a thin knit or polo neck for a chic look.

H&M Slim-fit Oxford-weave Blazer, $69.95, hm.com/ca

Denim tailoring

This washed denim sport coat can be paired with a pair of crisp, white trousers for a very modern take on a classic suit look.

Brooks Brothers Washed Denim Sport Coat, $238.80, brooksbrothers.com

Joining fashionable forces

Theory x Mr Porter menswear capsule on sale now

Theory has designed a 17-piece capsule collection for Mr Porter, now available around the world. The clothes range from shirts, jackets and coats to trousers, and also include a couple of suiting options, all in Theory's trademark mix of minimalist designs with modern materials and technical touches.

"The simplistic elegance of this collection perfectly captures the spirit of the Theory esthetic, and their modern approach to design make this a great fit for the Mr Porter customer," outlined Mr Porter's Toby Bateman.

Key pieces include the 4-pocket field jacket in Teflon wool ($695), seen above. Prices for the collection as a whole range from $245 for the white or cotton poplin shirts, up to $1,145 for the leather jacket.

AFP

Mash-up in the making

Smythe and Beaufille to release blazer collaboration

The Canadian design duos behind two notable womenswear brands are teaming up and fusing their styles in a new collaboration. Smythe co-founders Andrea Lenczner and Christie Smythe have joined with sisters Chloe and Parris Gordon of ready-to-wear and accessory line Beaufille to create a blazer for spring 2015.

For the collaboration, Smythe's classic Smoking Jacket silhouette has been fashioned from jacquard. Fine artist Eve Gordon — mother to Chloe and Parris — handpainted the imagery on the garment based on a vintage Chinoiserie brocade. The blazers also showcase a Beaufille custom-designed, dragon-emblazoned brass metal button. "The design community in Toronto is small but connected. Ten years in, it's always inspiring to meet emerging designers who are making their mark," Lenczner and Smythe said in a statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian street style

Spotted in: Toronto

Name: Brit

Age: 27

Occupation: Florist & Bartender

What she's wearing
Vintage 1950s Irving Posluns for La France coat, H&M sweater, vintage dress from VV, boots from the Bay and Coach purse.

Her inspiration
"I like to have fun with prints and silhouettes. I wear clothing that is comfortable and uber feminine. My style icons are the Olsen twins and my friends."

THE KIT IS A MULTI-PLATFORM BEAUTY AND FASHION BRAND WHICH INCLUDES AN INTERACTIVE MAGAZINE AND DYNAMIC APP, A WEBSITE, KIT CHAT — AN E-NEWSLETTER PROGRAM — AND A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER SECTION, TOO!

Rugged gifts for lumbersexuals

Whether your lumberjack sleeps in a studio apartment or a log cabin, any plaid-clad beardyman will appreciate gifts that add a bit of retro style to his space this Christmas

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

The cords are stacked

Fill his sofa with pillows that give the look of a well-stocked log pile. Wood Stump Velvet Cushions, $20, Simons.ca.

Patch the woo

What happens to a lumberjack's jeans once they're worn out? Handmade Denim Patch Rug (5'x7'), $280, eCarpetGallery.com.

The scent of whiskers

Tell him to keep the beard while bringing back memories of the barber shop. Bromley Barber Shop Vanilla Shaving Cream Candle, from $10. Homesense.ca

Foam and substance

Create a dense, soft foam to top his favourite craft beer. Norm Architects MENU Beer Foamer, $33, TheBay.com.

Ready to crack open a brew

The perfect stocking stuffer for the hip beer connoisseur. John Deere Bottle Opener, $30, JohnDeere.ca.

In the grind scheme of things

Let your lumberjack chop the wood while you grind some freshly roasted coffee beans. HARIO Small Coffee Grinder, $40, Amazon.ca.

ALL PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED

Festive cocktail party tips

Style gurus Steven Sabados and Chris Hyndman know hosting a cocktail party is a fabulous way to celebrate the holiday season. But without a proper plan in place, your festive affair could be forever remembered as an epic fail. They asked their resident entertaining expert Cocktail Deeva to share her tips on how to throw the ultimate cocktail soiree that will not only impress your guests, but also help you keep your cool. Steven and Chris' holiday specials air from Dec. 15-19 at 2 p.m. EST on CBC Television.

ALL TEXT PROVIDED BY STEVEN AND CHRIS. PHOTOS BY ALEXIS GLINERT.

Invitations come first

Remember, your party is only as good as your guest list, so ask yourself: • Who is coming to the party? Friends? Family? Work colleagues? Will there be kids? • If it's a work event, keep things professional and avoid mixing groups. Be clear about what kind of party it is. • Sending a paper invitation is a classy way of inviting small groups. For larger groups, send an online invitation. It's fast and effective.

Timing and food are crucial

If your party starts between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m., you better be feeding your guests more than a shrimp ring! But if things get underway at 8:30 p.m. or later, serving cocktails and hors d'oeuvres is acceptable.

If you have a limited amount of finger food, arrange the items on a tray and pass it around the room. That'll ensure your Uncle Bob takes one item instead of six, as it's harder for people to pig out when someone is looking at you.

If you're going buffet style, place food in different sections of the house to keep people moving.

Place a small carton or bin in a visible place so folks have a place to throw their used picks and napkins (people always forget that one).

Make sure to give yourself time to set everything up before the party begins. Get ahead by placing dishes out days before and using labels to indicate what's going where.

Holiday Fizz Cocktail

Step 1: Make dark lemonade

Ingredients:
- 2/3 cup water
- Zest and juice of 2 lemons
- 1/4 rubbed sage
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 cloves
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon Kitchen Bouquet
- Carbonated water

Combine water, lemon zest, nutmeg, cloves, sage and sugar. Continually stir and boil for about a minute until the sugar is dissolved.

Remove from heat and stir in the lemon juice and Kitchen Bouquet. Let cool, then strain.

Add roughly 1/3 cup of this syrup to 1 cup of carbonated water or combine to suit your taste. If kept in the refrigerator, dark lemonade can last up to 3 weeks.

Step 2: Add the booze!

- 2 ounces dark lemonade
- 2 ounces gin
- 1 ounce soda
- Garnish with rosemary sprigs

Set the mood

Entertaining 101: Turn off those ugly lights! Strong, overhead lighting can create unflattering shadows on people's faces. Dim your lights, if you can, or use candles to make your guests glow. • Curate a music playlist that keeps the party going. Don't just plug in your personal iPod, hit shuffle and hope for the best. There's something about going from Beyoncé to Bob Dylan that doesn't feel right. • Also be mindful of what music you're playing when you want people to leave — opt for slow jams when it's time to say goodnight. • If you want to go the extra mile, load your playlist onto inexpensive USB sticks and hand them out to guests before they leave. People will love the take-home gift!

Squash moves past side dish duties

Swedish Meatballs with Squash & Mushroom Stroganoff. This hearty meal will warm you up on cold nights and can be served over a few different bases

"Chef Alexandra Feswick of Toronto's Drake Hotel shared this recipe with us after we tried her version at Terroir, Canada's largest annual food symposium," write Rob Firing, Ivy Knight and Kerry Knight in their book The Everyday Squash Cook.

"Tender meatballs, sweet squash and earthy mushrooms coated in a rich sauce make for a hearty and warming meal on a chilly evening. Her secret? A pinch of cardamom. It sounds crazy but just give it a try.

"Serve over brown rice or egg noodles, garnished with a little chopped parsley."

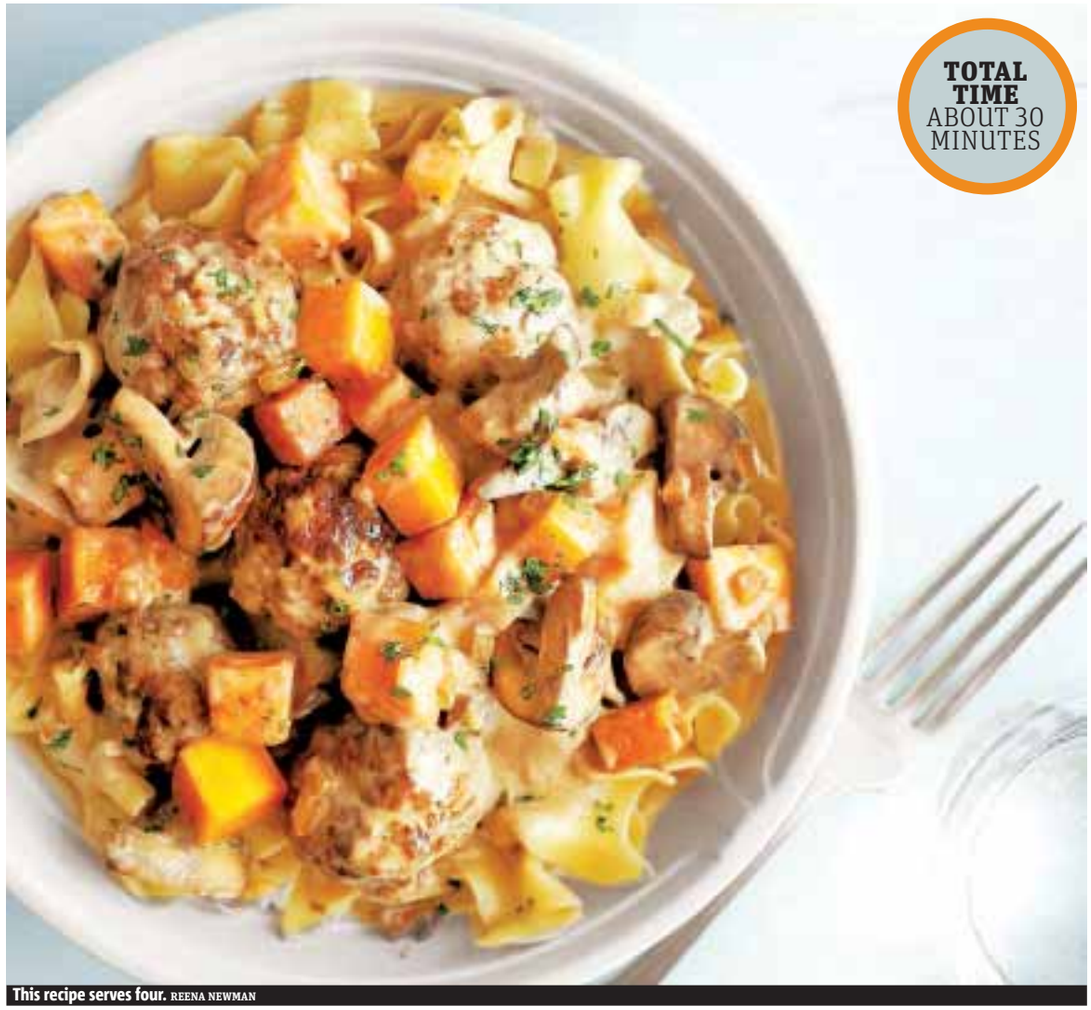
1. In a bowl, combine the beef and pork and season with salt and pepper to taste. Using the palm of your hands, form meatballs (we make ours golf ball–size).

2. In a large, oiled saucepan over medium heat, cook the meatballs in batches until browned all over. Transfer the cooked meatballs to a plate.

3. Drain all but 1 tablespoon fat from the pan. Sauté the onion until softened, about 1 1/2 minutes. Add the mushrooms and squash and stir to combine. Stir in the butter and flour. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1 to 2 minutes, until the flour darkens. Stir in the chicken stock, then the cream and sour cream. Add the cardamom, soy sauce and allspice and stir well. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper, if needed. Return the cooked meatballs to the pan, gently stir to combine and cook for about 5 minutes, until the squash is cooked through. If the mixture is too thick, add a splash of water or milk. Serve immediately, sprinkled with chopped parsley, if desired. RECIPES FROM THE EVERYDAY SQUASH COOK BY ROB FIRING, IVY KNIGHT & KERRY KNIGHT © 2014. PHOTOGRAPHY © REENA NEWMAN. PUBLISHED BY HARPERCOLLINS CANADA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb medium ground beef
- 1/2 lb medium ground pork
- Kosher salt and fresh cracked black pepper
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 2 large button or cremini mushrooms, chopped
- 2 cups peeled chopped butternut squash
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 can (14 oz) chicken stock
- 1/2 cup whipping (35%) cream
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- Pinch of ground cardamom
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1/4 tsp ground allspice
- Chopped fresh parsley, garnish



This recipe serves four. REENA NEWMAN

Cookbook of the Week

Squash in all its various glories

Butternut, pumpkin and acorn may be the most popular of squash, but The Everyday Squash Cook introduces us to many other varieties and ways you can enjoy them.

The release by Rob Firing, Ivy Knight and Kerry Knight features more than 100 recipes and includes tips on handling, cutting and storing squash.

Among the recipes are Squash Fried Rice, Fish and Old Bay Squash Chips, Ricotta-Stuffed Zucchini Blossoms and Butternut Cranberry Pudding Cake. METRO

This recipe makes two sandwiches. REENA NEWMAN

Snack. Open-faced Pumpkin Banana Sandwiches

"Make these robust open-faced sandwiches on hearty multigrain bread," write Rob Firing, Ivy Knight and Kerry Knight in their book The Everday Squash Cook.

"They're a healthy alternative to chocolate-hazelnut spread in the mornings and have a sweetness kids like.

"This recipe will yield two sandwiches, but feel free to really load up on the ingredients if you so desire."

1. Spread cream cheese over one side of each piece of toast, then spread a layer of pumpkin purée overtop. Top that with a layer of banana. Drizzle with honey and sprinkle with cinnamon, to taste.

Ingredients

- 4 slices multigrain bread, toasted
- 2 tbsp cream cheese
- 2 tbsp canned unsweetened pumpkin purée
- 1 ripe banana, sliced
- 1 tbsp liquid honey
- Ground cinnamon

For your phone

Next Glass (iPhone/Android; free)

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Keeping the roads safe this holiday

Leaving the party.
How to make sure your guests get home safely throughout the season

YLVA VAN BUUREN
For Metro

Everyone knows that you should never drink and drive. But with the holiday party scene in full swing, it's especially important to remember to plan ahead to stay safe and keep other drivers and pedestrians safe, too.

If you attend parties with the same group of people, have a discussion before every event and decide to either take public transportation or assign a designated driver.

"The DD should verbally commit to it by saying out loud: 'I will not drink, I am the designated driver,'" advised Ottawa-based certified etiquette expert Julie Blais Comeau.

At a party if you see that a friend has had too much to drink, "be courageous and say so," said Blais Comeau, and help them to make safe arrangements to get home. If you're in a bar and not comfortable confronting your friend, you could ask management to handle it.

For party hosts, here are tips to help keep guests safe.

• Hold the party at a licensed venue — rather than home. Venue employees are professionally trained to be alert and responsible for people who are drinking.

• Contact a catering company and hire a bartender for your house party — that person will be trained in how to handle someone objectively who has had too much to drink, said Blaise Comeau.

• If you don't have a bartender, serve drinks rather than have guests serve themselves. That way you can monitor how much guests have been drinking. Don't serve alcohol to anyone who is intoxicated.

• Watch your own alcohol consumption. The more you drink, the more difficult it will be for you to supervise and intervene.

As a host, you can take measures to prevent your guests from drinking and driving. SHUTTERSTOCK

• Pre-arrange taxis for the end of the night. Let guests know so they're aware they will leave their keys, said Blais Comeau. Also, throw a brunch the next day, so there's more than. one good reason to come back."

• Invite people to sleep over ahead of time so they bring their toothbrushes and sleeping bags if need be. Or, help make arrangements with nearby hotels or motels if possible.

• Serve plenty of non-alcohol beverages. Make them festive by using frozen cranberries in pitchers of water for example.

• "Stop serving alcohol long before you expect the party to break up," said Blais Comeau. For example, serve cocktails and finger foods until 10. Then, start serving tea and coffee.

By the numbers

1 **Every day, on average, four Canadians are killed and 175 are injured in impairment-related crashes.**

2 **Between 1,250 and 1,500 people are killed and more than 63,000 are injured each year in Canada in impairment-related crashes.**

3 **The prime time for impaired driving is between midnight and 4 a.m.**

Source: MADD Canada

Be safe this holiday season.
Don't drink and drive.

Greg Selinger
MLA for St. Boniface
Premier of Manitoba
204-237-9247
GregSelinger.ca

Nancy Allan
MLA for St. Vital
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JimRondeau.mb.ca

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AndrewSwan.ca

Melanie Wight
MLA for Burrows
204-421-9414
MelanieWight.ca

Death of a legend

The sport of hockey was "elevated forever" by Jean Beliveau's "character, dignity and class," NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said Wednesday after the iconic player's death at the age of 83. Here are just some of the highlights from Beliveau's storied career with the Montreal Canadiens:

Stanley Cups won

17

His name is on the Stanley Cup a record 17 times, having won the mug 10 times as a player and seven as an executive.

Awards

Art Ross Trophy for most points (1956), Hart Trophy as NHL MVP (1956, 1964), Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP (1965).

Points

1,219

When Beliveau retired in 1971, he was the Habs' career leader in points with 1,219. That's 507 goals and 712 assists.

Playoff points

176

He's the NHL's all-time leading playoff scorer with 176 points in 162 games.

Jean Beliveau in April 1967.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Jets roar back to top lowly Oilers in OT

Jets forward Blake Wheeler gets dumped by Oilers defenceman Andrew Ference on Wednesday night at the MTS Centre. The Jets came from behind to win 3-2 in overtime, with Dustin Byfuglien scoring with less than four minutes left to tie it before Mathieu Perreault scored 17 seconds into OT. Jets defenceman Jacob Trouba had a goal and two assists on the night. JOHN WOODS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

FIFA willing to talk but on its own terms

Artificial pitches.
Secretary-general's call for dialogue doesn't appear to include those affected by playing surface — the players

The war of words over artificial turf at the Women's World Cup has become bogged down in semantics ahead of Saturday's draw in Ottawa.

And that is frustrating the legal team representing a rebel faction of players as it tries to chip away at the monolithic world governing body of soccer.

While a legal challenge snakes its way through the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, lawyers for the players have gone down a number of avenues to keep their storyline front and centre.

Jerome Valcke, FIFA's secretary-general, seemingly opened up a new path in an Oct. 29 fifa.com article when he said: "We will again welcome open dialogue at the official draw on Dec. 6 in Ottawa."

But with no players expected to be present at the draw other than Canadian captain Christine Sinclair, it appears that dialogue looks to be very limited.

Most players outside North America are in season with their clubs while the U.S., China and Brazil are in Brazil for a tournament. And Sinclair, like the other Canadian players who answer to the host Canadian Soccer Association, has been deliberately kept out of the fray.

Hampton Dellinger, the lead lawyer for the women, jumped on Valcke's "open dialogue" comment and invited the FIFA executive to participate in a conference call around the draft with American Abby Wambach, Germany's Nadine Angerer, Spain's Veronica Boquete and Brazil's Marta.

Valcke declined the offer, telling Dellinger he was unable to meet during the time requested. But he said team representatives and FIFA officials would meet at the draw.

"FIFA welcomes continued dialogue with players through the competent bodies within FIFA, including the Committee for Women's Football and the FIFA Women's World Cup, wherein female players' interests are duly represented," he said in his response.

Valcke will be at the draw and, according to the Oct. 29 article, is willing to talk — though it seems on his terms. The 2015 Women's World Cup, which features 24 teams, runs June 6 to July 5 in Moncton, Ottawa, Montreal, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The players' side

The women's legal complaint argues that playing their showcase tournament on artificial turf is tantamount to discrimination because the men play their World Cup on grass. In recent weeks, lawyers for the women have also pointed the finger at tournament prize money and the use of goal-line technology as differences between the men's and women's events in a bid to bolster their different gender, different treatment argument. While lawyers for the women have been active on legal offence, FIFA has offered a minimal defence — usually via its website. FIFA argues that playing on turf is within the laws of the game, provided it meets set standards, and that artificial turf makes sense for the Canadian climate. And Valcke has said a men's World Cup on artificial turf could come "sooner rather than later."

4 SPORTS

Chelsea effective without Costa

Premier League.
Backups Drogba and Remy both score in absence of star striker

Didier Drogba and Loic Remy showed Chelsea can cope without injured top scorer Diego Costa on Wednesday, with the backup strikers both scoring as the Premier League leaders swept aside Tottenham 3-0 to extend their unbeaten start to the season.

Although Tottenham threatened early on, with Harry Kane heading against the crossbar, Chelsea took control after a Drogba-to-Eden Hazard one-two created the Belgian midfielder's goal in the 19th minute.

Tottenham gifted Chelsea another goal inside three minutes, with goalkeeper Hugo Lloris' weak clearance allowing Hazard and Oscar to combine to set up Drogba. It was the 36-year-old striker's fifth goal since returning to Chelsea this season after two years away.

On Wednesday

3	0
Chelsea	Tottenham

"It's remarkable ... he is not selfish, not vain — a humble guy who plays and fights for the team," Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho said. "The important thing is he is here and will finish his career with Chelsea. It looks, for me, that he's going to stay doing other things when he finishes his career."

After Drogba was substituted in the second half, replacement Remy exposed the feeble Tottenham defence again in the 73rd, sidefooting in the third.

Fourteen matches into the season, Chelsea stayed six points clear of champion Manchester City, which won 4-1 at Sunderland.

Only in the first 15 minutes did Tottenham ever look like winning at Stamford Bridge for the first time since 1990. Picking up where they left off in Sunday's victory over Everton, Tottenham's players were vibrant and assertive going forward.

Only the woodwork denied Kane after meeting Aaron Lennon's cross with a header. Kane, the 21-year-old striker who wasn't born when Tottenham last won here, also easily went past Gary Cahill but flashed a shot across the face of goal.

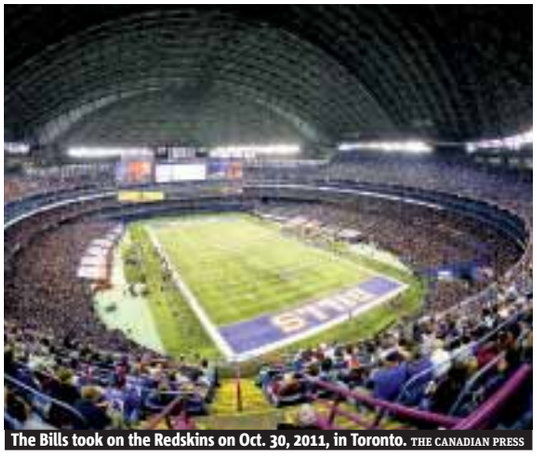
Then, as so often against the Premier League powers, Tottenham capitulated.

Cesc Fabregas' shot was saved by Lloris, but soon Hazard evaded Lennon and after combining with Drogba, he struck under Lloris at the near post.

"We started the game very bravely, but the first chance they scored from," Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino said. "I'm not happy."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

metro AR Chelsea's Didier Drogba, right, celebrates with Branislav Ivanovic after scoring a goal against Tottenham Hotspur on Wednesday at Stamford Bridge in London. Drogba also set up another goal in Chelsea's 3-0 win. Scan the image with your Metro News app for a roundup of the rest of the day's Premier League action. SHAUN BOTTERILL/GETTY IMAGES



The Bills took on the Redskins on Oct. 30, 2011, in Toronto. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bills in Toronto series sacked

It started out in 2008 as a dream to bring the NFL to Canada.

But after six years of manufactured hype and lacklustre games, the Buffalo Bills in Toronto series has been blown up for good.

The Bills and Rogers Communications, who were partners, agreed on Wednesday to terminate the four remaining years left on the series.

The NFL team and Rogers had reached another deal in 2013 to extend the series for five more years, but in March, both parties announced the series was going on hiatus as they conducted reviews.

Upon hearing the news of its death, fans rejoiced on social media. One person called the series "an abomination" and another tweeted that this was the "best news so far today."

When asked for comment, the CFL's Toronto Argonauts, the Rogers Centre tenants who were always seen as main losers in this arrangement, maintained their position of not commenting.

The 2008 agreement had the Bills playing one "home" game a year in Toronto for five years through to 2012, plus three pre-season games (later reduced to two).

Drinking the Haterade

Bills players hated the series, in which they were 1-5.

- Huge numbers of fans in Western New York boycotted the series, viewing this series as a step to ultimately move the team to Toronto.

Keith Pelly, president of Rogers Media, said in a statement that "at the end of the day we've concluded that the best thing for fans on both sides of the border is to end the series."

Perhaps the fate of the series was sealed last month when neither the Bills nor the NFL approached the Rogers people about hosting the snowed-out Bills-New York Jets game. Instead, the Bills game was played Monday, Nov. 24, in Detroit.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mixed-gender duets

Synchronized swimming will feature men

Swimming world governing body FINA voted last weekend to introduce mixed-gender duets to synchronized competitions.

The decision, however, didn't come with a timetable for introducing mixed-gender synchronized swimming and synchronized diving at major international championships. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Davis Cup

Canada to play Japan in 1st round

Canada's Davis Cup tennis team will return to Vancouver for its first-round World Group tie against Japan.

The rematch of last year's first-round match, which Japan won 4-1, will take place March 6-8 at the University of British Columbia.

Canada is competing in the elite World Group of the tennis tournament for the fourth straight year.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Browns sticks with Hoyer at QB

Brian Hoyer held off Johnny Manziel again. The Browns are still his team.

Cleveland's struggling veteran quarterback kept his job and will start Sunday against Indianapolis after coach Mike Pettine decided he would be a better choice to lead the Browns down the stretch than Manziel, the super-hyped rookie who gave the team a spark last week in a loss at Buffalo. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CFL

Dickenson to take over for Hufnagel, but not until 2016

John Hufnagel will be back on the sidelines next season as he tries to guide the Calgary Stampeders to a second straight Grey Cup title.

Hufnagel announced Wednesday that he will return as Stampeders head coach for 2015 before handing the job to offensive coordinator Dave Dickenson.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

John Hufnagel captured his second Grey Cup title as the Stampeders' head coach on Sunday. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

metro AR

→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Stay calm when dealing with relationship problems. According to the planets everything will come right in the end so why upset yourself?

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Do you focus on what others expect you to do or what you want to do? Only you can decide but if you try to get the best of both worlds you may end up with neither.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
There will be opportunities to improve yourself, personally and professionally, over the next few days but there will also be challenges that force you to make far-reaching changes.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
The only thing worse than allowing yourself to be anxious about a money matter is pretending there is nothing wrong at all. A sensible balance is needed to find a solution.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You can perform an important service for a colleague today, a service that will put them in your debt. It's nice to know you can call on a favour in return.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You must control any tendency you may have to go to extremes, especially when involved in demanding physical and mental activities. Balance.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
If you hope for the best today, you will get it. What you need to realize is that you always attract into your life the kind of luck you think you deserve.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may be in a serious frame of mind but not everyone shares your solemn outlook. Have you considered the possibility that they've got it right and you've got it wrong?

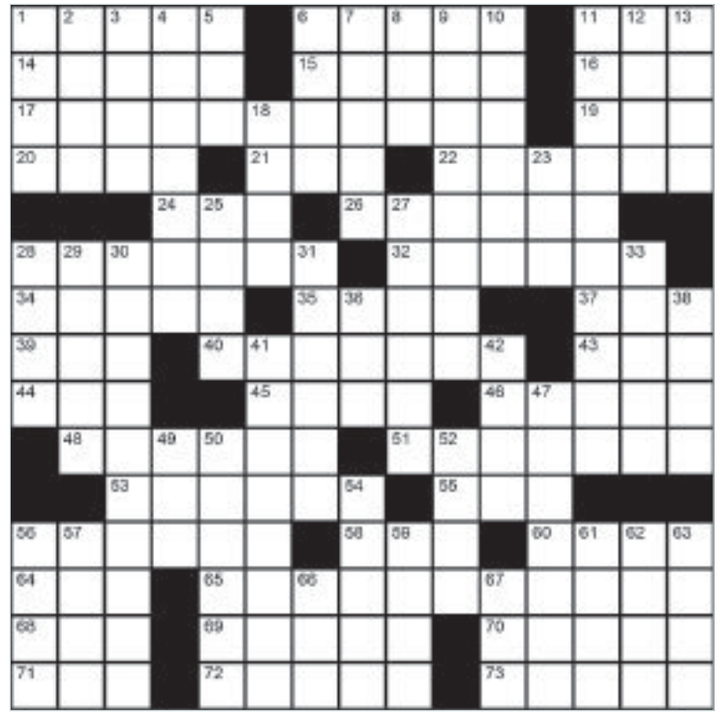
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Today's Sun-Uranus link means there are major changes on the way, changes that will benefit you in so many ways. If there is a creative project you have been toying with now is the time to get serious about it.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You are in one of your rare extravagant moods and are determined to indulge. A few days from now you may regret spending so much on so little, but for now you don't care.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
What seems a major issue to some is no more than a sideshow to you. You're in one of those moods when you can't take anything too seriously.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
What occurs over the next 24 hours will remind you not all things in life are as predictable as you might like them to be.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



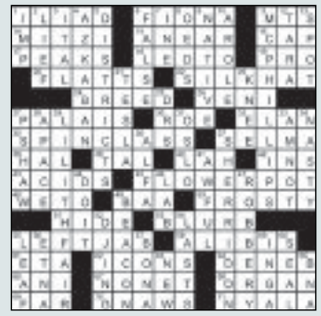
Across

1. Finely chop
6. Britney Spears, Princess __ __
11. Radio types, e.g.
14. Mid-'90s sitcom, "__ Own": 2 wds.
15. Airport arrival
16. Scoundrel
17. End a relationship: 3 wds.
19. Sash sort
20. Start to 'sack'
21. 'South' suffix
22. This battle is on!: 2 wds.
24. Tavern drink
26. Actor Gabe
28. Admiral in Antony and Cleopatra
32. Directs
34. Jean __ (Quebec pharmacy chain)
35. "The Godfather" (1972) role
37. 'Rem' ender (TV clicker)
39. Affixed, abbreviated
40. Trailblazer
43. Feminine side
44. Morse Code bit
45. 'Trick' suffix
46. Australia's gemstones
48. Dan Aykroyd's "Coneheads" (1993) character
51. Saskatchewan village; or, singer Aaron
53. Calgary band, __ and the Dark
55. Wilmington's US state
56. Safe place
58. Fruity drink
60. Chunks
64. Tokyo, formerly
65. Historic part of Quebec's largest city: 2 wds.
68. Hot Balloon link
69. "__ Gold" (1997)
70. Ron Weasley's li'l sister
71. 'Inc.' cousin
72. Cup: French
73. Haze/pollution mixtures

Down

1. Fake
2. Aerosmith's "Love __ __ Elevator"
3. The Big Easy
4. Criminal
5. Verdi aria: "__ Tu"
6. Alphabetic sequence
7. Get an 'F'
8. Gambling game, __ Gow
9. How Tiny Tim gets through the tulips: 2 wds.
10. Mortar and __
11. Canadian brand of whisky: 2 wds.
12. __ Wawa (SNL character)
13. Mix
18. Therm. reading
23. Freelancer's encl.
25. 5th Dimension's "__, __ and Away"
27. Sailor's 'backward'
28. Mil. school
29. __ _ '_' (Did fine on the exam)
30. __ House Provincial Historic Site (Home of Alberta's first Premier)
31. "_ __ sante!" (To your health!, in French)
33. Tranquil
36. Dvorak's "Symphony No. 9 __ _ Minor"
38. Massachusetts' motto starter
41. Ottawa-born country singer Kira
42. Amble
47. "Scott __ vs. the World" starring actor Michael Cera
49. Bucharest money
50. Certain canoe
52. Biblical garden
54. Titles
56. Authentic
57. Revise
59. Pharmacy quantity
61. Vintner's prefix
62. Loud sound
63. Singer Mr. Stone's
66. Cap-__-Rosiers (Village in Quebec, home of Canada's tallest lighthouse)
67. "30 Rock" sketch, '_ __ with Tracy Jordan'

Yesterday's Crossword

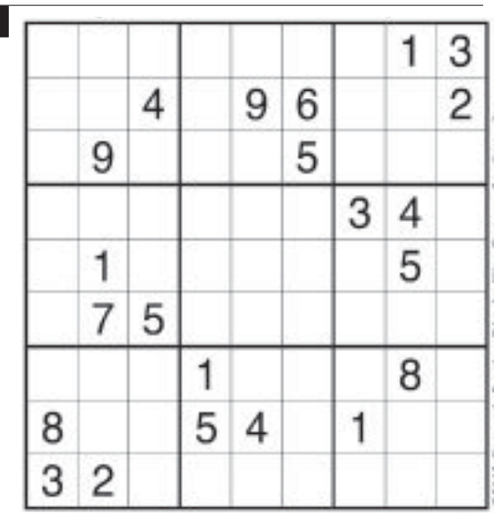


Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



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Yesterday's Sudoku

9	3	4	6	2	5	1	7	8
6	7	5	3	8	1	4	9	2
1	8	2	7	4	9	5	3	6
8	5	3	4	9	2	7	6	1
4	9	7	1	6	8	3	2	5
2	6	1	5	3	7	9	8	4
7	1	8	9	5	6	2	4	3
3	2	9	8	1	4	6	5	7
5	4	6	2	7	3	8	1	9

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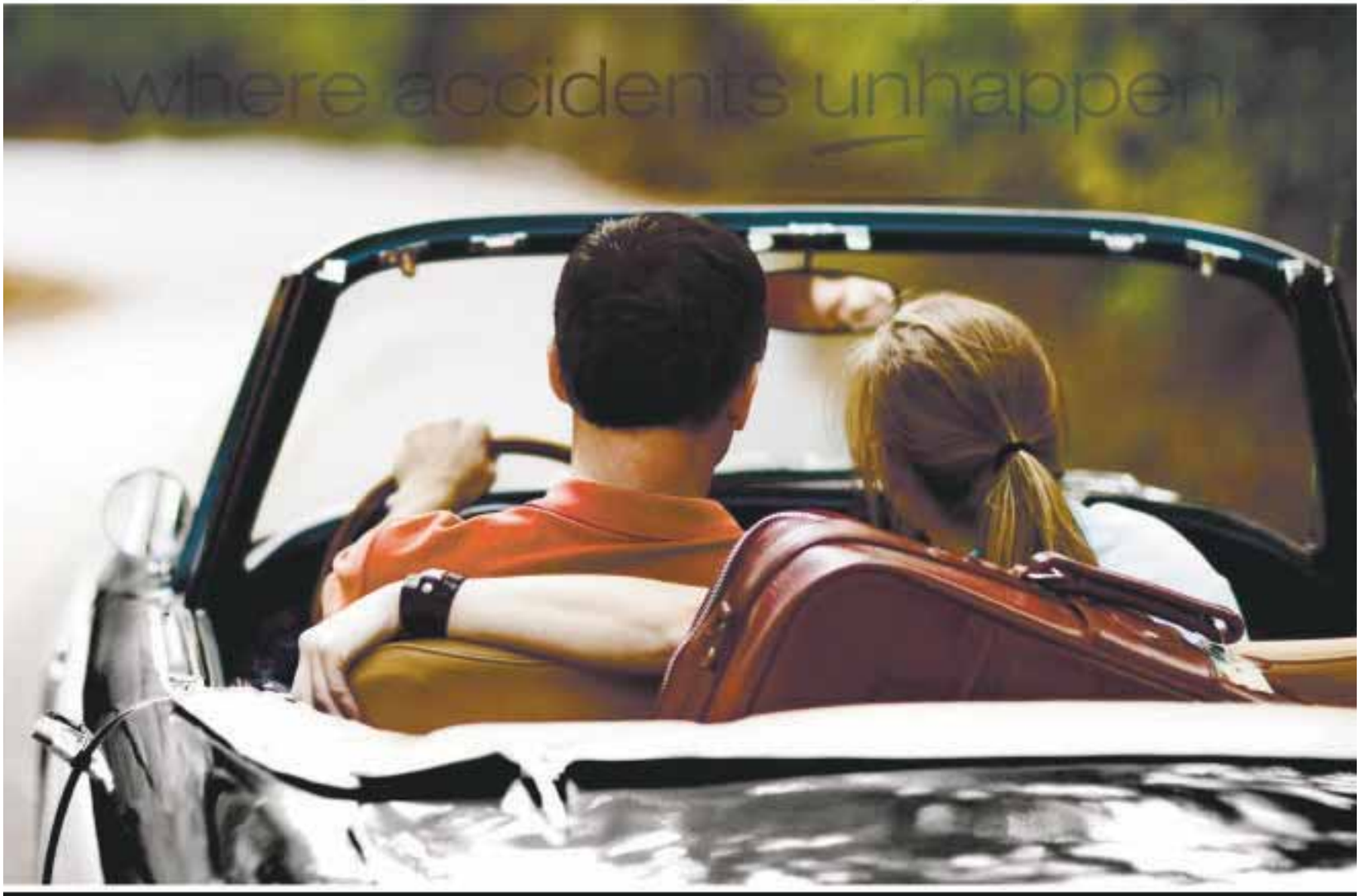

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